

# Ellendale Man Sentenced for 2017 Murder

*Fatal shooting sends Wilmington man to prison; two others plead guilty to raping minors in two separate cases*

An Ellendale man received a 35-year-prison sentence for murdering another man. Deputy Attorneys General Susan Schmidhauser and Stephen Welch secured the sentence for 36-year-old Don Martinez. In July 2017, Martinez fatally shot Kevin King in the parking lot of the Silver Lake Estates housing complex in Milford during an argument. In December 2018, Martinez pled guilty to Murder Second Degree, Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony, and Possession of a Firearm by a Person Prohibited. A Superior Court judge sentenced Martinez, barred from having a gun because of previous felony convictions on Burglary, Aggravated Menacing, and Conspiracy charges, to 35 years in prison, followed by 6 months of either home confinement or work release, then 2 years of probation. Milford Police Department investigated the case, with DOJ social worker Ester Powell and paralegal Sue Balik assisting with the prosecution.

Deputy Attorneys General Matthew Frawley and Jamie McCloskey secured a prison sentence for a 20-year-old Wilmington man who shot and killed another man on a Wilmington street. In January 2017, Antonio Russell fatally shot 21-year-old Jamiere Harris of Newark after Harris approached and threatened Russell over a drug debt. The incident occurred as the two argued about money just after midnight near the intersection of Seventh and Market Streets. In August 2018, Russell pled guilty to Manslaughter, Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony, and Possession of a Firearm by a Person Prohibited. A Superior Court judge sentenced Russell to 15 years in prison, followed by 6 months of either home confinement or work release, then 18 months of probation. At the time,

Russell was on juvenile probation for a 2016 drug dealing adjudication that prohibited him from having a gun.

A 62-year-old man is awaiting sentencing after pleading guilty to raping a teenager. Deputy Attorney General Kathleen Dickerson secured the plea to two counts of Rape Fourth Degree from Robert Halama of Camden. In September 2018, police stopped to check a car pulled over to the side of the road on Rabbit Chase Lane in Smyrna. As officers approached, they found Halama in the back of the car with a minor, and learned that sexual activity had just taken place. The victim told police that other encounters with Halama had taken place over the previous 2 months. A Superior Court judge will sentence Halama in March; there is no minimum prison time but the crimes carry as much as 30 years in prison. Detective Bill Davis of the Smyrna Police Department assisted on the case, along with DOJ social worker Lorraine Freese and administrative assistant Penny Mannering.

A Felton man will register as a Tier 3 sex offender and spend time in prison after his plea and sentencing on rape charges. Hector Hernandez-Vargas, 39, pled guilty in Superior Court to Rape 3rd Degree and Sex Abuse of a Child by a Person in a Position of Trust. Police arrested Hernandez-Vargas in May 2018 when authorities learned that he repeatedly raped a child in his care for a year beginning in 2013. In addition to having Hernandez-Vargas register as a sex offender, a judge immediately sentenced him to 8 years in prison, followed by 2 years of probation. Deputy Attorney General Alicia Porter prosecuted the case with assistance from social worker Lorraine Freese.